

**UP, UP
and AWAY**

BRITAIN'S MEANEST THIEVES

They knew victims were handicapped

by Anne Plummer

VANDALISM and robbery are well-known symptoms of the sickness of present-day society, but when thieves smash up the home of somebody who is obviously blind and disabled, and others snatch the handbag of a girl sitting in a wheelchair, then standards of human behaviour seem to have sunk to an all-time low. Spastics News is shocked to have to report that three spastics have been the victims of despicable crimes, and in each case there was no possibility that the guilty did not know their victims were disabled.

Linda Berwick, 26, who has a double handicap of blindness and cerebral palsy, won The Spastics Society's Achievement Award in 1974 for her voluntary work on behalf of other disabled people. One evening in August she arrived home from her work in a City bank to find the house had been broken into.

Stereo equipment, a mono tape recorder, a portable television, jewellery and money had been stolen; all the cupboards and drawers ransacked and there was broken glass everywhere. The face of Linda's Braille typewriter had been smashed in, and the Interlock system by which she speaks to callers at the front door had been wrenched off the wall. The thieves had helped themselves to drinks and poured the remainder all over the furniture.

Wheelchair

'They must have seen it was the home of a disabled person,' Linda told Spastics News. 'My walking sticks were at the foot of the stairs and they had to reach over my wheelchair to get at the television.'

Among the items stolen

were two Braille watches, one of which was a special presentation model from America awarded to blind people who have made an outstanding contribution to society. There are only 12 like it in the world and perhaps it is the loss of this which has hurt Linda most deeply.

'People have tried to console me with, "Well, at least you couldn't see the damage," but that's just what makes it worse,' said Linda, 'to have to sit helplessly while sighted people try to tidy up and to be told at intervals that another of your treasured possessions is missing—that's the most upsetting part.'

She added: 'I've worked hard at my job for the last five years and often made an effort to go into the bank when I felt rotten. Now, everything I've been able to buy during that time has gone in an afternoon.'

No trace

Extensive police inquiries have so far revealed no trace of the stolen goods.

'People have been very kind,' she said, 'But it won't bring my own stuff back again.'

This is not an isolated case, for within days of being told about Linda's burglary, Spastics News heard of two other spastics who had been callously robbed. One, an 18-year-old girl, who lives not far from Linda in East London, was sitting outside her home in a wheelchair when three girls snatched her handbag from her lap. The victim's mother gave chase, but was unable to



LINDA BERWICK on a happier day — with her Achievement Award trophy. Now her 'reward' is to be robbed and have her home vandalised.

catch the thieves. She saw them throw the handbag away, but they kept a purse which had less than £1 in it.

But such despicable crimes are not confined to the London area. Our third shocking story comes from Scotland.

Peter Williamson, 52, has been in an Edinburgh hospital for 18 years. He cannot speak, and has useful movement in only one thumb, but he learned to type on an electric machine, and this became his main link with other people. Now his typewriter has been stolen from the Occupational Therapy department of the hospital, together with a page of his life story which he was writing to help doctors understand his case fully.

'My life'

Writing an open letter to the thief in a Scottish daily newspaper, Mr Williamson said:

'... The few lines I had typed may not have meant anything to you, but they represented hours of hard work for me. ... It could be some time before the hospital can get me another machine—if they ever do. ... As stolen property it's probably worth only a few pounds to you, but to me it's my whole life. ...'

Perhaps a suitable punishment for despicable robbers would be to give them a taste of the kind of life led by their victims. But even murderers serving a life sentence have more freedom than Peter Williamson. And it is doubtful whether the rats who broke into Linda Berwick's home would show a fraction of her strength of character in facing up to a dual handicap.



HOLIDAYMAKERS from Huddersfield and District Spastics Society went to the Channel Islands via fork-lift truck. A party of 27 group members set out from the Leeds-Bradford Airport at Yeadon for a 10-day holiday at St Ouen, Jersey, and wheelchair users were hoisted aboard their British Airways Viscount in style.

Pictured on the truck platform ready to go up, up, and away is Roger Nuttall with ground receptionist Alison Allanach, while (left to right, below) George Brooke, Michael Lamb and Susan Hodgson await their turn.

Picture by courtesy of Bradford Telegraph and Argus.

Lincs spastics on Greek TV

LINCOLNSHIRE Spastics Centre at Scunthorpe, run jointly by all the Lincolnshire groups, is becoming well-known internationally.

The daily life of the residents at work and leisure was recently seen by viewers all over Greece when the film 'Active Spastics' was transmitted by an Athens television station. The film was made some years ago by a team of volunteers living near the centre, and is available from the Society's film library.

In addition, the architectural plans for the centre will be used, with slight modification for a centre to be built at Newton, Melbourne.

Piggies bring in pounds

BEAUTY, the Shropshire Spastics Society's fund-raising pig, continues her sterling charity efforts, and has produced her sixth litter. Ten of the 12 little piggies survived and went to market for a profit of £60. Altogether Beauty has had 78 babies and is now expecting her seventh litter.

In October, the Shropshire group is holding its third annual sponsored swim. It is hoped to improve on the two previous years' totals of 200 miles for £1,500 and 400 miles for £2,500 respectively. Both efforts were entered in the Guinness Book of Records.

Cook's tour for cash

AS the temperature soared into the 80's one August afternoon, a young man of 20 strolled into the Society's Park Crescent headquarters, looking the picture of health and vitality. Stephen Cook, of Parkstone, Poole, had just walked all the way from Bournemouth—a distance of more than 100 miles—and planned to start walking back again to raise money for spastics.

Stephen took three days to cover the distance between Bournemouth and London, with pauses for sleeping. Because of the heatwave he had planned to travel at night, but the amount of holiday traffic on the roads made this dangerous, so he had to keep going in daylight.

Local sponsors had promised a total of £350 for the Dorset Spastics Society, and on his return journey, Stephen carried an official collecting tin for on-the-spot donations. This is the second one-man

sponsored walk which Stephen has made over the same route in aid of spastics. The first was in February 1972, when he raised £150 for the Bournemouth Spastics Society, now the Dorset Spastics Society.



MEMBERS of The Spastics Society's staff wave goodbye as Stephen Cook sets out on the long return trudge.

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Welsh schools get Society's message

DURING the year, John Roberts, the Society's Youth Organiser for Wales, has visited many schools in the Principality. He has shown the film 'What is a spastic?' and given talks in English and Welsh, about the work of the Society and its local groups.

In return, the Monmouthshire Spastics Society has invited parties of schoolchildren to visit its Cwmbran Work Centre. One school visit has already taken place and the pupils were very impressed by the work at the centre. It is hoped that two similar visits will take place in September.

Devoted group worker's death

THE death has occurred at 84 of Mr W. F. Fitzgerald, a devoted friend of the South West Middlesex group of The Spastics Society.

Mr Fitzgerald, who was the grandfather of a spastic, joined the group in the mid 1950's after his retirement from the Civil Service. He became group treasurer and served in this capacity until 1962.

He was also responsible for running a remedial clinic for spastic children at Feltham from 1956 to 1963.



They want a lounge—so they walk

SPONSORED walkers prepare to set out at Lancaster and Morecambe College of Further Education. The event raised over £250 towards a new sun lounge at the Society's Lancaster Training Centre. Trainees from the centre were among the 60 walkers who took part.

Picture by courtesy of Lancaster Guardian.

Do you qualify for new pension?

MR ALFRED MORRIS, Minister for the Disabled, has announced that preparations for the introduction of the new non-contributory invalidity pension are now complete. Mr Morris said:

'I hope that around 220,000 people will be receiving the new non-contributory invalidity pension of £7.90 a week from its introduction on November 20 1975. The non-contributory invalidity pension is a brand new benefit and a notable step forward in our policy of improving social security provision for chronically sick and disabled people.

Those who will benefit will be severely disabled or chronically sick men and single women who have been incapable of work for a long time and have not been able to build up a sufficient contributory record for a contributory benefit. They will now get, for the first time, a basic benefit without any means test.

'I have mentioned men and single women specifically because married women living with their husbands will not be eligible for the non-contributory invalidity pension in November; a housewives' version of the non-contributory invalidity pension will be

introduced as soon as possible afterwards.

'The Department of Health and Social Security will be getting in touch with those people receiving supplementary benefit who are likely to qualify for non-contributory invalidity pension in November, and also with mental hospitals where there are long-stay patients. Other men and single women who think they might qualify for the pension and have not heard from the Department of Health and Social Security by the end of September should make inquiries at their local social security office in October.'

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The travels of Joey and friends



Ernie Roberts



Michael Sangster



Tom Blackburn

'Incredible journey' from Surrey to Switzerland

TO TAKE a trip down Memory Lane with Joey Deacon, Ernie Roberts, Michael Sangster and Tom Blackburn is now a major journey. They will take you on a long and winding road from Surrey to Paris, through Burgundy to Switzerland, and then back to Paris, Calais and finally home. The memories along the way are vivid and unforgettable, and were gathered during a 14-day and 1,400-mile trip which gave the four men the holiday of a lifetime. They are now back home at St Lawrence's Hospital in Caterham, Surrey, and settling down to write another book, a second 'Incredible Journey.'

Joey, of course, is known to millions through his autobiography 'Tongue Tied' and an award-winning BBC Horizon film. He cannot speak but his grunts are interpreted by Ernie Roberts, who won The Spastics Society's Achievement of the Year Award earlier this year.

Both Joey and Ernie are spastics and confined to wheelchairs. Tom and Michael are two life-long friends who push the chairs and help with washing, feeding, dressing and putting to bed.

The four men wanted to go abroad for a holiday, and this was made possible by the royalties from 'Tongue Tied' and some donations. The party was completed by Dr Geoff Harris, psychiatrist, David Jenkins, nurse, and myself.

We set out from the hospital in a minibus early one Monday morning. Wheelchairs tied firmly to the roof-rack and bound for the cross-Channel ferry at Dover. The ferry taught me a lesson that was persistently hammered home during the holiday—the world was not designed with spastics in mind.

On deck

We picked up Ernie and Joey and carried them up a narrow, steep staircase on to the deck to watch the White Cliffs disappear. A hovercraft sped by in a cloud of spray and we saw Calais rising out of the sea.

We drove straight from Calais to Paris, arriving at the Hotel du Palais Bourbon in the early evening. We were in the heart of a network of narrow streets, government offices and foreign embassies, but only five minutes from the Seine and the Place de la Concorde.

The next morning we set

off walking and pushing to the Champs Elysees and the Arc de Triomphe. A dull mist hung over Paris, but we sat at a pavement cafe and ordered four beers, two coffees and one lemonade—46 Francs, or more than £5! As we stood under the Arc de Triomphe watching the cars hurtling around us and honking their horns at each other, Michael looked despairingly at me and said: 'Blimey, it's worse than Purley here.'

The steps

But we finally managed to force our way through the traffic and wandered along to the Palais du Chaillot. Here we were right in front of the Eiffel Tower with its huge steel girders climbing way up into the mist. There were hundreds of steps tumbling away from the Palais down to the tower—so we carefully bumped our wheelchairs down to the bottom.

The following day we drove out to Chartres to see the famous cathedral—which also has a long flight of steps leading up to it! Dr Harris carried Joey inside and sat him in a pew to look at the famous Rose Window and the racks of burning candles.

As we carried Joey out again, a doctor came running up and said: 'I am English, is he ill? Can I help?' We explained that Joey was quite alright but had to be carried because he was a spastic. The doctor looked down at Joey in Dr Harris's arms and said: 'Ah, Joey Deacon, I've heard all about you. And from what I've heard you don't need any help from me.' He took a picture of Joey, Ernie, Tom and Michael and promised to write to them at the hospital.

One evening in Paris we fed Joey in the hotel and then all went off for a meal. We sat in a restaurant with Joey's chair parked outside on the pavement. Most of the passers-by just gave Joey rather hostile looks, but one woman stopped and dropped a one franc piece in his lap.

After the meal it was dark and we walked down to the Seine. We looked down the

river to the floodlit towers of Notre Dame, a pleasure boat came by lighting up both banks in a blaze of orange light, the fountains played in the Place de la Concorde and the Champs Elysees was a line of yellow headlights on one side and a line of red brake lights on the other.

We wandered over to the Tuilleries Gardens where the bands of the British Cavalry were playing. We could not see them but we stood outside and listened, and when Colonel Bogey started, Joey's face lit up and he tapped his feet in time with the music on the footrest of his wheelchair.

'Joey says it makes him feel proud to be British to come to Paris and hear our band playing,' said Ernie.

After five days in Paris we left for Switzerland. It was two days of solid travelling before we reached our destination—a hostel at Gwatt, on the shores of Lake Thun. After the man-made splendours of Paris we were now surrounded by mountains, the unique and overwhelming treasures of nature. The famous Eiger-Munch-Jungfrau range were only a few miles from Gwatt.

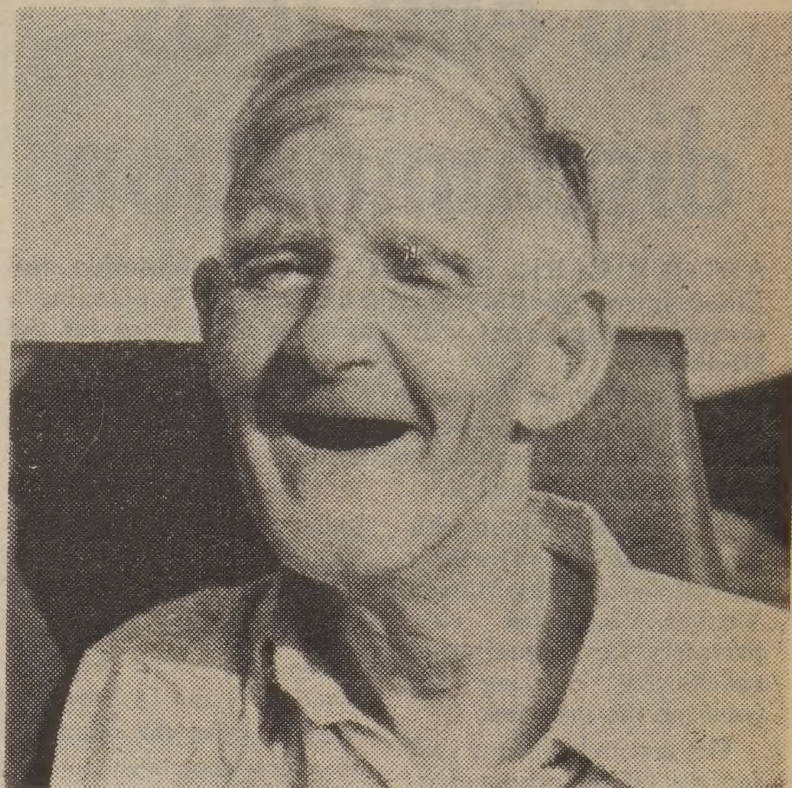
The scenery changed every few minutes, as the mist moved on down the lake, another storm broke and the mountains disappeared. The rain was very heavy but when it stopped and the mists cleared the view was truly magnificent.

Storm after storm had swollen Lake Thun until it lapped quietly into the grounds of our hostel. The lake is about 20 miles long, stretching from Thun to Interlaken and with mountains rising steeply on all sides.

We boarded the steamer at Thun to make the two hour trip to Interlaken. This was really a ferry service for local people, stopping about a dozen times on the journey which meant that we could get a good look at the Swiss villages. At the end of the day Ernie recorded his impressions on tape: 'The scenery was gorgeous.'

The day before we set off for Paris again, we drove a few miles to the foot of the mighty Niesen mountain. Because of his weak chest, we left Joey in the minibus with Dr Harris.

Tom, Michael and Ernie climbed into a tiny funicular railway carriage with David Jenkins and myself. There was



JOEY loved foreign travel.

nobody else setting out for the summit and as we looked up the almost vertical track we understood why! For 15 minutes we climbed until we reached a large, cold concrete shed and the carriage stopped. We thought we had reached the top—until the train driver opened the door, garbled something in German and walked off with Ernie in his arms. He placed him in another carriage a few feet away and beckoned to us to join him. We were only halfway up.

Soon after we left the mountain station all the scenery disappeared in the clouds. The Alpine flowers that had decorated the lower slopes vanished under a blanket of snow. We could just see massive steel and wooden walls built into the hillside to foil avalanches—and still we climbed. Soon we could not even see the avalanche walls—everything outside the windows of the carriage was white.

Half an hour after we left Joey and Dr Harris we reached the second station. Even here, 7,000 feet above sea level, somebody had built a flight of steps! We carried Ernie up to

the summit and stood with our feet in deep snow and our heads literally in the clouds. The holiday's 'do anything, go anywhere' aim was suddenly realised.

I have nothing but admiration for Joey, Ernie, Tom and Michael. Joey, silenced and misunderstood for so many years, still needs constant physical care and his three friends provide it so expertly.

I watched as Joey's feeding time came around. Tom asked Joey what he fancied, Joey told Ernie and Ernie told Tom. Tom got out the tins and Michael gave him the can opener. They heated up the dinners, tipped them out and then put the plate on the windowsill to cool. Then Ernie arranged a pillow behind Joey's head, Michael put a napkin under Joey's chin and Tom carefully spooned the food in. That is teamwork.

Now the team is back in Caterham, starting on another book: 'The day we left the hospital and went on a boat for the first time.' This has only been an interim report!

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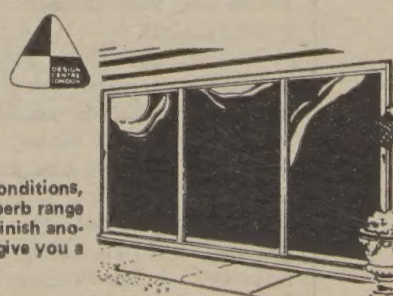
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His campaign to end jobs discrimination

ARTHUR CARR, who runs Carr's Rehabilitation and Employment Advisory Service in London, is planning a campaign to get next year known as 'The Year for the Disabled.'

This way he hopes to stop discrimination against the mentally and physically handicapped which he feels could otherwise require legislation similar to the Race Relations Act, to end it.

Mr Carr, who along with Brook Street Bureau's special desk run by Marion Voakes, has the only privately run organisation specifically catering for jobs for the disabled.

His researches show that for the 60,000 who voluntarily register as disabled, there are at least 60,000 who do not.

He said: 'I am not capable of sustaining a campaign alone, and mine is not the best voice, but I'm better than none at all,' when he held a conference to present his Service's annual report.

The campaign, said Mr Carr, would be against the system rather than Government, private industry or any other single body. He criticised large employers such as the Civil Service for their reluctance to employ people who had suffered a mental illness, and private industry for evading the quota system of employing the disabled.

He cited the French nationalised car company, Renault, as an example of what could be achieved. 'There,' he said, of '70,000 employees, 11,000 of the labour force is disabled, eight per cent to a serious extent.'

Ideal chance

Mr Carr said that with the possible spread of nationalisation in this country under the present Government, there would be an ideal chance for greater employment prospects for the disabled.

He stressed that many of Britain's biggest private companies were already going out of their way to help the handicapped, and cited ICI who arrange for one of the company lawyers to be chauffeured to and from his home, fed at lunchtime, and his papers and books handled for him because he is a spastic. ICI along with Fords, Formica

and the Home Office had all given grants to the Advisory Centre to help keep it going.

Mr Carr raised a number of points in what he called his Charter for the Disabled, and these included the setting up of a new department to meet the disabled's requirements. Members of Parliament and Churches should concentrate on the handicapped within their provinces and since there was no trade union in existence to give the disabled a voice, trade unions and student unions should give active support. In an approach to the trade unions, Mr Carr said, he had not received a single reply. He wanted every union to appoint a member specifically to be responsible for the handicapped in branch areas.

Mr Carr called for a national petition to be conducted throughout 1976 calling for a rehabilitation and employment scheme to be presented to Parliament at the end of the year's campaign.

Buy now-pay later

A MINI-BUS has been presented to Coalville and District Spastics Society by the local Rotary Club. Although only part of the total cost has so far been raised, club members decided to purchase the vehicle in advance to offset the effects of inflation.

Her orange idea has lots of appeal...

WITH the help of Outspan Oranges, Oriska Cameron, Local Appeals Officer of the Society's South East Region, has devised a novel fund-raising idea.

The Spastics Society had been given three crates of

The boys of St Trinian's

IT was a bit of a drag in Halifax, Yorkshire, when five male members of the Calderdale Spastics Society dressed up as the girls of St Trinian's to take part in a fund-raising pub crawl.

Last year as 'bunny girls' they brought in over £630 for group funds and since the whole draggy idea was launched 10 years ago they have collected more than £6,000 from pub customers. The moral seems to be 'Raise a laugh and raise more cash.'

Picture by courtesy of Halifax Evening Courier.

succulent oranges and Oriska, looking for new ideas for the stall she was running at South-sea Show in Hampshire, decided to use the fruit as the basis for an unusual competition.

She invited passing visitors at the show to take part in the contest, and about 78 per cent accepted. A further 12 per cent gave a donation but would not compete. For 10p, each competitor received an orange and, using a special plastic tool supplied by Outspan, took part in a race to see who could finish peeling the fruit first. Contestants could then eat their oranges which meant that at least all received something for their money, unlike raffles or tombolas.

At first, Oriska awarded two more oranges to prizewinners. Later, when she found the contest going so well, she gave prizes from among the gifts which had been donated to the spastics' stall.

The competition raised £19.05 in a very short time, and Oriska said she could have made much more money if the supply of oranges had not run out.

The success of this pilot scheme has encouraged the Society's fund-raisers to investigate the possibility of holding further 'A-Peel for spastics.'

Fund raising is such a drag



They adopt a ship and 'go to sea'

WHEN the 'British Holly' steams over the horizon for the harbour at Barry it means a treat in store for the children of the Society's Craig-y-Parc school.

For they are linked to the vessel by the Ship Adoption Society which provides interested schools with a ship. For the last 10 years Craig-y-Parc has been a member and the 'British Holly' is the second vessel they have been connected with.

The Commander, Captain Hywel Phillips, invited the children aboard and showed them his personal cabin. Now the children are busy making him tapes to listen to on his next voyage.

Said Headmistress Mrs C. Kearslake: 'It is an excellent scheme because it means that children who are otherwise stalemated get an opportunity to 'go to sea' as it were and the Captain always brings us items of interest whenever he is in our area.'

Groups aid London centre

BY August 1 a total of more than £3,800 had been donated by the Regions and local groups to the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre in Fitzroy Square, London. This was in response to the annual appeal letter sent out in the middle of June, asking for support in meeting the centre's yearly deficit.

The contributions included £1,000 from the East Regional

Fund, which also donated a further £500 towards the running costs of the Social Work and Employment Department. Northampton and County Spastics Society gave £500, Folkestone and District £250, and Wolverhampton and District £200.

A further 11 groups have contributed £100 each and nearly 30 smaller amounts have been received.

Free gas checks

BRITISH Gas has announced a new scheme to provide free gas checks for handicapped people living in any part of the country. No charge will be made for adjustments to appliances and the supply of minor parts up to a cost of £1. However, applications for this service must be made through local authorities, social services departments or other organisations representing the handicapped.

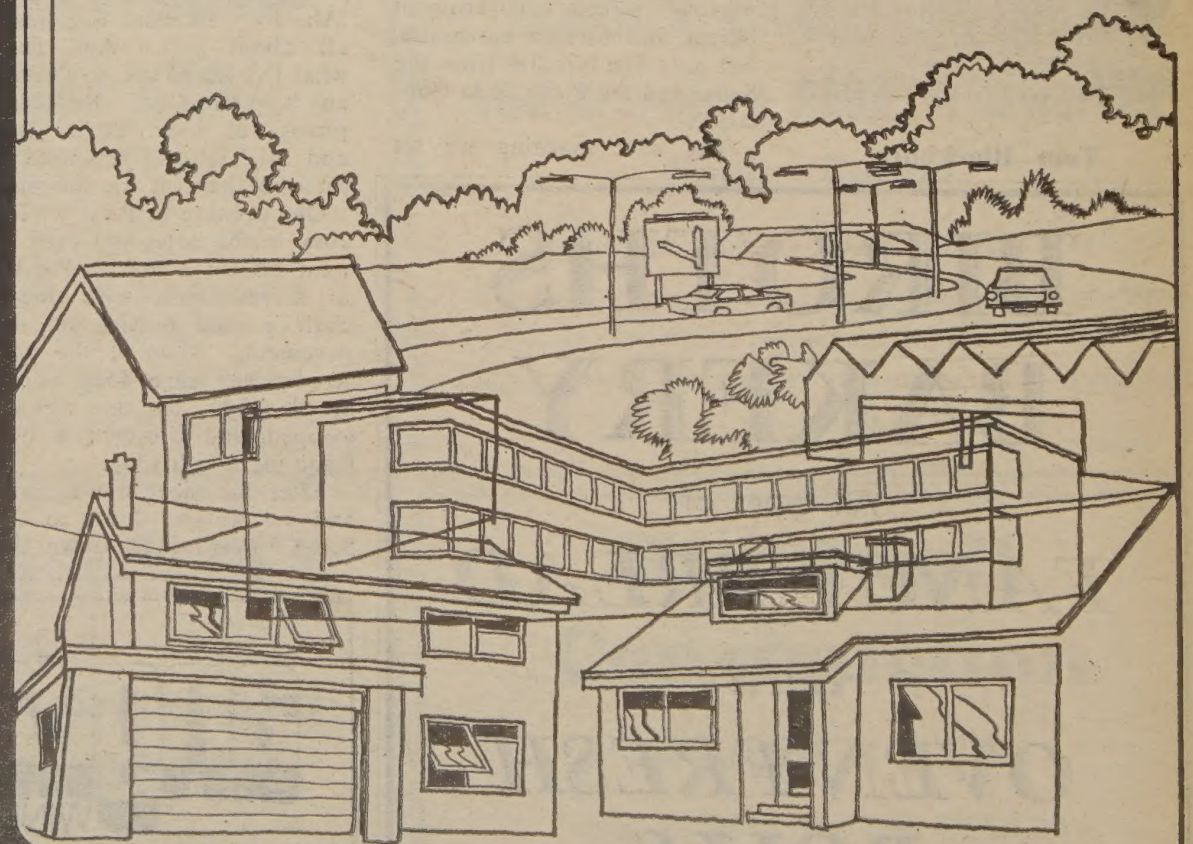
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-and the day when many were called but only 10 were chosen

THERE are a lot of things that you can 'do for charity.' There are sponsored walks, fasts, knit-ins, silences, along with pop shows, pet shows, and seeing how many goldfish you can swallow if doughnuts or pork pies seem a trifle indigestible.

However, on reflection there can be few more gruelling and uncomfortable ways of doing one's bit than to be ordered to take part in a charm contest.

Oh, what a field day for the office wags—spying an innocent victim of the organiser's ploy: 'Fancy yourself don't you?' to the unkind cut: 'Charm—you couldn't charm a snake out of the grass.'

I had not wanted to do it, of course—enter that is. I was just quietly sitting at my office

desk pondering over prose destined for the front page of Spastics News. As mellifluous phrases floated around my unconscious, my eye-lids drooped as a sign of heavy thought and prolonged concentration, till I was rudely startled by a voice saying, 'You'll do.' It was the Lady of the List.

'Good cause'

Wielding pencil and piece of paper, she was collecting names for a list of possible charm girls. 'It's not a beauty contest so you'll do,' she informed me. Aghast I protested. 'No.' I muttered weakly. 'Yes,' she answered, brooking no contradiction. 'Everybody says that and it's very trying—I've got the photographer coming tomorrow. It's in a good cause—it's the least you can do.'

So I did it. Allowed myself to be entered for Top Ten

Promotions' Spastics Pool Charm Girl Contest.

Flash Day dawned and like Shakespeare's school boy, 'all unwillingly' I made my way to the office at Park Crescent. Twenty of us took it in turns to jostle before the mirror, painting here, erasing there, brushing, combing, patting, and eventually grimacing at our other selves. We consoled ourselves that no looking glass ever gave an accurate reflection. Like a well-rehearsed choir we chorused in unison that we were only agreeing to be photographed because it was for a 'cause'—no convent could ever contain such a mob of modest ladies as the 'Ladies' at Society headquarters.

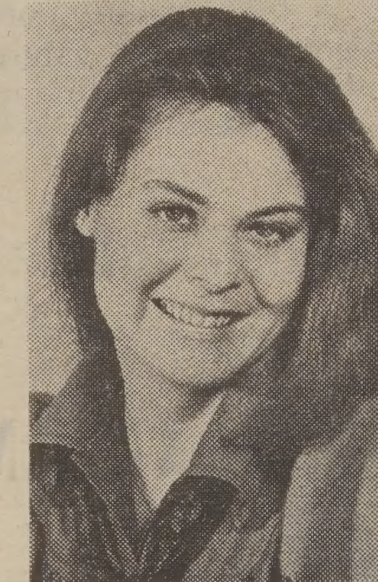
And so we took ourselves one by one to the photographer's studio—the small committee room, imitating a television studio with blazing arc lights.

It is an amazing fact that

under that glare, the most natural and spontaneous arrangement of mouth muscles in a tender smile, jolly grin, happy laugh, or ecstatic expression, looks like something carved out of Plaster of Paris before it has properly set.

Then came the wait—which of us would be chosen for the final 10 whose pictures appear on the contest entry form.

However, here we are—warts and all, the final 10. Beneath these shy and sweet smiles are 10 tender-hearted girls reluctantly enticed from every corner of the Society's headquarters. We come from the typing pool and reception desk, from seats of power beside Heads of Departments (Very Important People they are, too) to the humble stool in the Spastics News office. In fact one of us is the tea lady—acting part-time. Despite our differences we trust though that you will find us ALL charming.



Liz Cook

Modest LIZ COOK, who wrote the story, appears in the line-up of the charmers from the Society's headquarters who appear in the Spastics Pool's Charm Girl contest. Your entry form appears on your Pool bulletin—of course YOU are a member of the Pool, aren't you?

Liz is a popular Spastics News reporter who will be leaving us soon, for a very happy reason—she is expecting her second child around Christmas.



Carol Royle



Chris McDonagh



Barbara Moss



Mary Jurawan

Peter's sporting success

PETER RODWAY, a pupil at the Society's Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge, weighed only 2½lb when he was born prematurely in Penang, Malaya. However, he has now managed to become the first spastic to receive a National Cricket Association Award for his proficiency in the game. The award scheme was started by the Frankton Cricket Club.

Now the same club has organised a sponsored golf tournament at Oswestry's Aston course. Through this tournament they raised £150 which was presented to help build the school a new swimming pool.

Top fashion aids SOS

THE world of haute couture is not known for its friendly nature, but the men and women who have put British fashion in the most celebrated wardrobes in the world are downing scissors and joining forces to help the Stars Organisation for Spastics.

On September 8, 17 fashion houses including Zandra Rhodes, Bill Gibb, Jaeger, Thea Porter, Quorum, and other glittering names from the pages of Vogue are staging an hour-long show at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Said SOS Chief Executive Sheila Rawstorne, 'The Royal Academy is a really beautiful setting for a show like this. None of the dresses and costumes cost less than £300 each. It is the younger with-it fashion houses that are taking part and nothing like it has ever been seen.'

'A Unique show of British Fashion' is organised by impresario Leslie Grade's daughter Anita.

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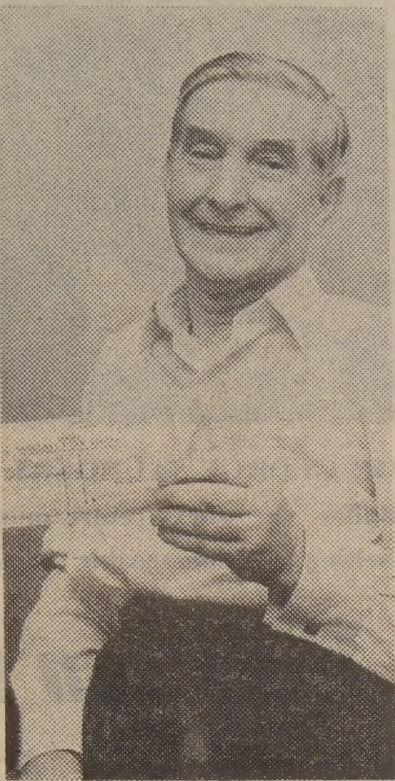
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£10,000 prize for widow who just wanted to help

A GOOD deed on the part of an elderly London widow has brought her a £10,000 cheque. For when Mrs Dorothy Fuller, now aged 71, joined the Spastics Pool 15 years ago her main idea was to 'help the spastics and handicapped children.' The many pools dividends and prizes were merely a secondary consideration.

But last month Mrs Fuller, a policeman's widow who lives at Clifton Avenue, Shepherds Bush, hit the jackpot. She won the first dividend prize of £10,000 and attended a



DESPITE severe disablement, Mr George McKenzie still manages to do a sterling job as a Pool collector, with his wife's help. Mrs Fuller was delighted to congratulate him on the £500 cheque which he earned as commission on her big win.

dependent than ever on the income that we receive from the Pool. Our regular supporters are very important people indeed. So it's nice to record that, as we see today, joining the Pool can be very advantageous for its supporters.

Mr Belson also presented cheques to Mr George McKenzie of Finlay Street, Fulham, the pools collector for Mrs Fuller's area, who is himself disabled and in a wheelchair, and to Mrs Nellie Sidaway, of Naylor Road, Peckham, SE15. Mr Sidaway, the collector for his wife's area, also received a cheque for £15 which he promptly passed back to Mr Belson as a donation to the Society. As Mr Belson commented: 'A very generous gesture indeed.'

Among others present at the

They all helped

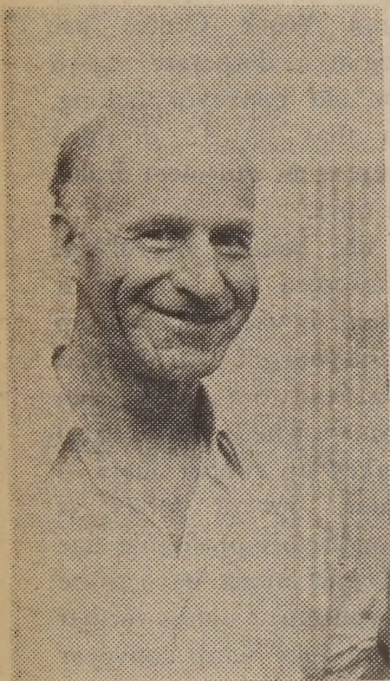
A DOOR knock held by the Lancaster, Morecambe and District Spastics Society has raised £429.41. Among those taking part were 16 senior pupils of Heysham High School, who collected £122.44 and members of the Friendship Club (affiliated to the '62 Club run for spastics by spastics), whose efforts brought in £52.79.

ceremony were Mr Roy Laver, a Director of Top Ten Promotions Ltd, Mr John Pritchard, the firm's marketing executive, Mr Peter Jones, regional manager for the Pool, and 12-year-old Linda Young, a spastic child from Gamlingay, Cambs. Linda presented Mrs Fuller with a 'thank you' posy of flowers.

What is Mrs Fuller going to do with her windfall? Well, apart from buying a colour television, she has no special plans at the moment. But, as she says: 'It's nice to know it's there in the bank. I was never more surprised than when Mr Jones called on me to tell me about my big win. Because, although I've had various gifts over the years, I never thought I'd win thousands of pounds. And one of the nicest things of all is that I've won this large sum of money by helping spastics.'



BIG smiles all round as Mrs Dorothy Fuller receives a 'thank you' posy from 12-year-old Linda Young, and Mr Dorrien Belson, Chairman of the Society, displays the £10,000 cheque which he presented to 'Spastics Pool' winner Mrs Fuller.



WHEN Spastics Pool collector Henry Sidaway received a cheque for £15 as commission on his wife's winnings, he handed it straight back to Mr Belson as a donation to the Society.

special celebration ceremony at The Spastics Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre in Fitzroy Square, London.

Mrs Fuller was presented with her five figure cheque by Mr Dorrien Belson, the Society's Chairman, who thanked her warmly for her generous support of the Pools over many years.

And he said: 'In these times of inflation the Society is more

It was just like Colditz-when our Chairman dug tunnels, picked locks and forged escape passes...

SOMEBODY at a meeting at The Spastics Society's headquarters mentioned 'the Dunkirk spirit' (it is, after all, being much invoked by politicians these days), and Mr Dorrien Belson, the Society's Chairman, said he would rather not think about Dunkirk, thank you very much. We asked why, and he replied: 'Well, I was left behind

there!' That was the end of the conversation, but Spastics News wondered what had happened to our Chairman 35 years ago when he was one of the ones that didn't get away in the historic evacuation which snatched over 300,000 British and French soldiers back to England to fight another day. Diffidently, Dorrien Belson told us his story...

around them, and after a short but hopeless skirmish, the little party found themselves looking down the wrong end of German guns. It was May 29th, and Dorrien Belson was 23 years old. Their captors told the British prisoners that they should be honoured as they had been captured by the crack 'Hermann Goering' Division.

Miserable Trek

Later that day, while the evacuation still continued at Dunkirk because inexplicably, the German forces had not advanced on the little seaport, Lieut Belson began the long, miserable trek to his first prison camp in Austria. 'We shuffled along for a lot of the way, remember we were exhausted and had been without food for a long time, and then we were herded into cattle trucks. After a couple of weeks we were brought very low. We were short of food for the first nine months in the prison camp, and people found that if they lay down they were dizzy and faint when they stood up. At the prison camp the daily menu was breakfast of ersatz "coffee" made of acorns, bread (one loaf was issued every five days to each man), and at midday we had soup—this was 99 per cent water with horrible bits of unspecified "meat" floating in it.' The evening meal was just acorn 'coffee,' and any of the bread that the hungry men had managed to save from their five-day ration.

After about six months, the Red Cross got itself more organised to meet the needs of prisoners, and the first food parcels began to arrive. At first, one parcel would be shared by six men, but later supplies improved, and the Red Cross parcels kept them going through five unhappy years of captivity. Conditions in the camp were dreadful,

On the way to Dunkirk

WHEN the war broke out young Dorrien Belson was one of the first to be called up because he was a part-time soldier in the Territorial Army. As a second lieutenant he joined his regiment and waited to be issued with the standard equipment for a junior officer — a revolver, a compass and a pair of field glasses. In those confused early days of the war he never got them and was to bitterly regret the lack of the compass later.

His regiment was part of the British Expeditionary Force sent to France and Belgium, and at each staging point young Lieut Belson inquired about his revolver, his compass and his field glasses. Each time he was told, you'll get them

at Rouen, or Brussels, or, finally, when you are going up into the line.

When the German Panzers made their classic breakthrough at Sedan and advanced at speed across France, Lieut Belson realised that he would soon be in the thick of the action. He asked, yet again, if he couldn't have a revolver at least? 'I'll tell you what, old boy,' was the phlegmatic reply from his senior officer, 'take the rifle from the first dead soldier you see.' He did so, and found that the bullet which had killed the soldier had also hit the rifle so it would not fire. But that was later.

'Halt advance'

Towards the end of May 1940, Lieut Belson and his men were somewhere in France and told they were going to be evacuated back to England from Dunkirk. They were on their way there when the Brigadier cheerfully told them that they were going to halt the German advance! At this time, as history buffs will recall, the famous commanders Guderian and Rommel and their Panzers were forging ahead at breathless speed, Belgium had capitulated, and the French Army was in dis-

array. Prospects for stopping the advance were not very bright... But, orders are orders, so off they went south of Dunkirk to do their best to hold the Germans while the evacuation went on.

What happened next is graphically shown in the opening titles of the TV programme 'Dad's Army.' Remember how the swastika arrows showing the German forces sweep across France, and then one of the arrows suddenly swings away down and round in an encircling movement. Dorrien Belson was there when it happened, and that unexpected drive by the Panzers left him and his men in a pocket surrounded by the enemy. They had no communication with headquarters (after the war Mr Belson discovered that the major who had been sent to recall him and his party had been killed trying to deliver the orders), and they decided to try and evade capture, and make their way to Dunkirk.

Lieut Belson set off with about 20 men, hiding by day and travelling by night (and how he wished he had his compass!) in an attempt to sneak through the German lines to the coast. After three days and nights of this they were completely exhausted, because the adventure came on top of days without sleep during the long withdrawal. The result was inevitable. Very early the next morning they heard German voices all

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It was just like Colditz...

Cont from Page 7

with about 100 men packed into each room, and the grim life was far removed from the adventurous existence depicted in the film and TV dramas of PoW camps.

In 1941, Lieut Belson and his fellow prisoners were loaded on to cattle trucks again and sent to Poland. After three days they arrived at Posen to be greeted by soldiers on horseback with whips, who pushed them through the streets to an underground fortress. They were being sent to such a place, the officers were told, as a reprisal for the alleged ill-treatment of German prisoners of war at Fort Henry in Canada. The Germans, it was claimed, were being kept close confined in darkened rooms and the same inhumane conditions were to apply to them. They were also told, optimistically, that extra letter cards would be issued for the British officers to write to their MP's telling them to seek better conditions for German prisoners.

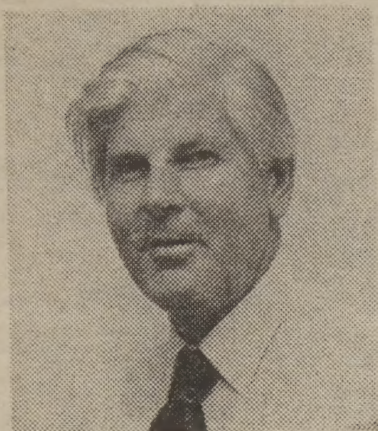
Dead rats

Conditions in the fortress were even more appalling than the first camp. 'When we went into our quarters there were dead rats on the floor,' said Mr Belson. 'Thirty of us were packed into each room, with two-tier bunks, three men on the top tier, and three below. The windows were boarded up and we had just one very dim bulb. We were locked in after roll call at 7 pm and stayed in darkness until next morning.'

The officers were told that they were also to be handcuffed, again to match the treatment allegedly meted out to German prisoners. When this order was given out at the first roll call, the British officers quickly realised that the Germans were expecting trouble. 'All the guards were heavily armed and wearing steel helmets—always a bad sign in a prison camp—and we saw that machine guns were trained on us from the watchtowers around the compound. Our reaction was one of amusement, and it must have maddened them. They were expecting a riot, and here we were laughing, and they really couldn't understand it.'

The officers meekly allowed themselves to be handcuffed. Very quickly they took each others handcuffs off—'we were all very good at picking locks by that time'—and for the weeks while the order was in force they would put on their handcuffs only when stopped by a guard!

They never really lost their sense of humour. One day, the Gestapo mounted an investigation at the camp, and coolly, one of the prisoners pinched the revolver out of the Gestapo officer's holster. There was little love lost between the



Dorrien Belson

Germany Army and the Gestapo, and the Camp Kommandant, secretly rather amused, the British suspected, sent out a polite appeal for the Gestapo man's gun to be returned. 'The joke is now ended, gentlemen,' he said. 'Please return the stolen property.' Needless to say, the appeal fell on deaf ears!

Another memorable laugh from prison camp days came during the early months of Mr Belson's captivity. Alsatian guard dogs used to prowl around the camp at night to deter possible escapees, but the British discovered that they could tame them into accepting the more objectionable contents of the soup. The result was the following camp order: 'It has come to the notice of the Kommandant that British officers have been giving meat to German dogs. German dogs have now been

given orders not to accept meat from British officers.'

During his five years as a prisoner, Mr Belson moved to many camps in Germany and the Occupied countries—from the roof of one fortress he saw trains loaded with tanks and guns on their way to the invasion of Russia. All the time, he and his comrades were obsessed with the idea of escape, and they were delighted when one camp turned out to be reasonably near the Swiss border. Because of the proximity to neutral Switzerland, more prisoners escaped from the camp than anywhere else in his time.

Dorrien Belson was in the thick of the escape activity. He had already become an expert lockpicker, and he quickly became an expert forger, too. He carved authentic copies of official stamps out of india rubber, and was adept at forging travel documents and work permits. He spent many months as a 'mole' digging tunnels, and longed for the day when his turn would come to escape.

In each camp all escape activity was handled by committees who had a strict system of priorities for people on the escaping list. Pilots, and officers from the intelligence service, because of their value to the British war effort, were top of the list, and next came fluent German speakers, because they stood a better chance of evading capture. Impatiently, Lieut Belson

waited his turn, but at last his name was on the list to escape through a tunnel he had toiled for months helping to dig.

But bad luck intervened. A few days before the planned breakout he was taken to hospital for an operation to remove his appendix—'the chaps back at the camp were very worried in case I said anything about the tunnel and the escape plan while I was under the anaesthetic. . . . He was looked after extremely well. The German Army surgeon who took out my appendix did such a good job that when I had stomach pains a few years ago the doctor who came to see me told my wife that it was quite clear I would have to have my appendix out! I had to tell him he was about 30 years too late.'

Secret radio

During Mr Belson's years in captivity he often knew the war news because the prisoners invariably had an illicit radio. 'It was always the most closely guarded secret of the camp. Few of us ever knew where the radio was hidden, and every night it was taken to pieces and each component hidden separately because there were very thorough searches all the time.'

So the prisoners knew about D-Day, the Allied invasion of France on June 6 1944, and they closely followed the progress of the troops towards their camp in Germany. And it was towards the very end of the war that tragedy struck for Dorrien and his friends.

The senior British officer at the camp decided that it was time to move out to meet the advancing Allies, and because they were British officers they would do it in style! There would be no slouching along, they would form up into a smart military column and march out proudly. It was a terrible mistake because at that time Allied planes were shooting up everything that moved on the roads, and a column of marching men was an obvious target. As they marched smartly out of the camp, an American plane swooped to attack, and many of the young men who had survived so many years as prisoners were killed. Lieut Belson was at the rear of the column as it left the camp, and by a miracle he survived to resume his career—he is now Chairman of an international wine company—and was eventually to become Chairman of The Spastics Society.

He resolved to put the experience of those PoW years behind him, but when Europe was returning to normal and people were beginning to cross each other's frontiers again for peaceful purposes, a rather amusing incident happened. Before the war, as a young student of wine, he had attended lectures at Vintner's Hall in the City of London, and in 1939 he won an essay competition. The prize was a visit to the German wine-growing region of the Mosel, and he was due to go in September '39, the very month he joined his regiment.

The organisers of the prize obviously had no doubt of final victory because they told him: 'We'll keep your prize for you until after the war—you can take your tour then.' Sure enough, the time came when Dorrien Belson was reminded that he still had his tour of the Mosel region to come, and when would he like to go?

'I told them that I had already toured the Mosel by cattle truck as a prisoner, and had seen quite enough, thank you. So they let me go to France instead.'



MR GEORGE SAUNDERS, a supervisor, and Mr Ron Bailey, the works centre manager, cut up old conveyor belting into manageable strips.

They can't belt up their work problem



MRS KAY BEST, work centre supervisor, is seen with a completed strip mat.

THE Monmouthshire Spastics Society's Cwmbran Work Centre has begun a desperate search for old conveyor belting, so that its 32 disabled employees can meet orders in time.

The belting, of rubber, reinforced by cotton or nylon, is used to make up do-it-yourself strip mat kits, sold to a Nottingham firm. The centre also makes up rubber mats to order, but it looks as though this profitable line of trade might have to be discontinued unless further supplies of scrap conveyor belting can be found.

The National Coal Board, a major user of this type of belting, is unable to help.

Brownies do good deeds every day—here's 250!



THIS is Brownie Jubilee Year and, to mark the occasion, the Tunstall District pack have raised £250 for local spastics. Picture shows Mrs Elsie Ashley (left), President of the

North Staffordshire Spastic Association receives a cheque from Carol Glover.

Picture by courtesy of Evening Sentinel, Staffordshire.

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'I want to make friends with ALL children...'

I THINK it is a great pity that able-bodied and handicapped children seldom have the chance to mix freely. I fully realise the difficulty of organising such meetings, but couldn't something be arranged?

Surely all children should have the chance to meet, converse and get to know each other? I think that it is really wrong to deprive us of this right.

Not so very long ago children of other races were in the same position, cut off from making new friends because of stupid prejudice. I, personally, could not care a hoot if the person, the human being that I was talking to, being friendly with, was, handicapped, coloured or whatever, that simply does not matter.

LETTERS

What does matter is for complete integration of handicapped children into our society to be effected... and very soon. The time has come for this to happen. First in school, I am sure there are lots of handicapped children who could attend an ordinary school for at least part of the time. Or social centres should be set up where handicapped and able-bodied children could meet and make friends.

It is time for all children to ask for such things to be done. And please, adults, if you don't do this soon it will be too late, and yet another generation will have lost the chance of build-

TV set or dry washing

YOUR story (August, Spastics News) about the way in which inflation is hitting the pockets of disabled couples living in homes of their own was touching. One husband said his wife should be provided with a spin dryer because she came in 'like a drowned rat' after hanging the washing on the line. Has he thought of selling one of their TWO television sets to buy her one? Welfare funds are not bottomless.

Mr R.S.
(Name and address supplied),
Manchester.

ing relationships that will achieve the full integration of the handicapped in the future.

When I discussed this with my friends I discovered to my amazement that many of them were frightened of disabled people. If they saw somebody in a wheelchair, for instance, they would look away or cross the road, because the sight upset them. They admitted that this attitude was silly, but said they couldn't help it. I am sure they feel this way because handicapped children are kept away from us, so we never have a chance to get to know what they are like. And while I'm on the subject, why do they call schools for handicapped children Special Schools? That is really sick-making, and must make the children attending them feel 'odd' and 'different'.

I am 13 years old and in the whole of my life I have never had the chance to make friends with a handicapped child. Surely this isn't right?

Christian Jenner (Miss),
Old Newton,
Suffolk.

Export of calves

I READ in the August issue of Spastics News that Thonegrove Agricultural Centre for Spastics in Dorset is exporting beef calves to Greece and Italy. I do hope that the warden has assured himself that these defenceless animals will be treated well on their long journeys. Conditions under which the animals travel are usually barbarous, and many thinking people are horrified that the Government has allowed the re-introduction of the export of live animals. Should a charity be part of this grisly trade?

'Animal lover,'
Kettering, Northants.

Record result

SWANSEA and District Spastic Association, hit by inflation like most charities, received a welcome fillip to its finances when it held its annual fete at Longfields, West Cross.

The funds benefited by over £1,300, the highest figure since the event was inaugurated 22 years ago.

Playgroup with a purpose

Self-help mothers pool ideas

A BIT of sunshine, a bit of sand and the Hartlepool Opportunity Playgroup are in heaven—or more precisely the Child Guidance Centre loaned free by the Cleveland social services department.

Two years ago there was nothing as Wendy McLoughlin, whose then two-year-old daughter Sharon, had been diagnosed spastic, knew only too well. "You feel so isolated with a handicapped child. No one seems to understand and until you talk to others you don't even know what help is available and you get more and more depressed," Wendy recalled.

Then she met Eunice Freer, who had just had a daughter, Rebecca, with spina bifida. Over coffee they talked and from their chat came the playgroup. Other Mums were roped in. "Now we can pool our problems and ideas, discuss facilities available for the handicapped and generally talk over the whole thing," Wendy added.

The playgroup started off in a youth club, but has been so successful that the social services department stepped in with the offer of the centre with its better facilities and opportunity for outdoors play. And the greater space means that no mother in the area with a handicapped child will have to wonder what she can do, for there are vacancies for children aged from birth to school entry, and with the start of the new school year some of the children will be leaving for primary school.



WENDY McLOUGHLIN and Eunice Freer with their daughters, Sharon, aged four, and Rebecca, two, can look back on two busy and challenging years getting the Hartlepool Opportunity Playgroup off the ground. BELOW: The sand pit is a natural focus of attention for the playgroup to get dug into on a sunny day. The outside facilities of the new centre mean that there are even greater opportunities of play for the group.

Pictures by courtesy of the Mail, West Hartlepool.



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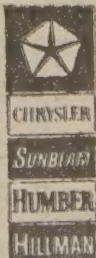
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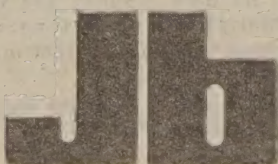
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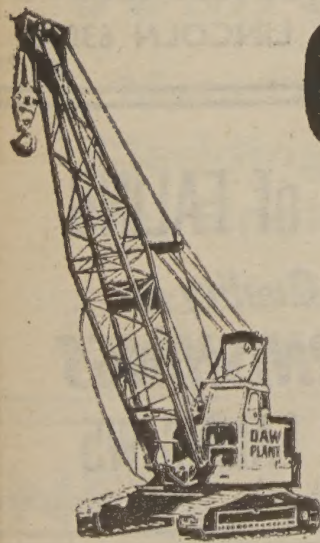
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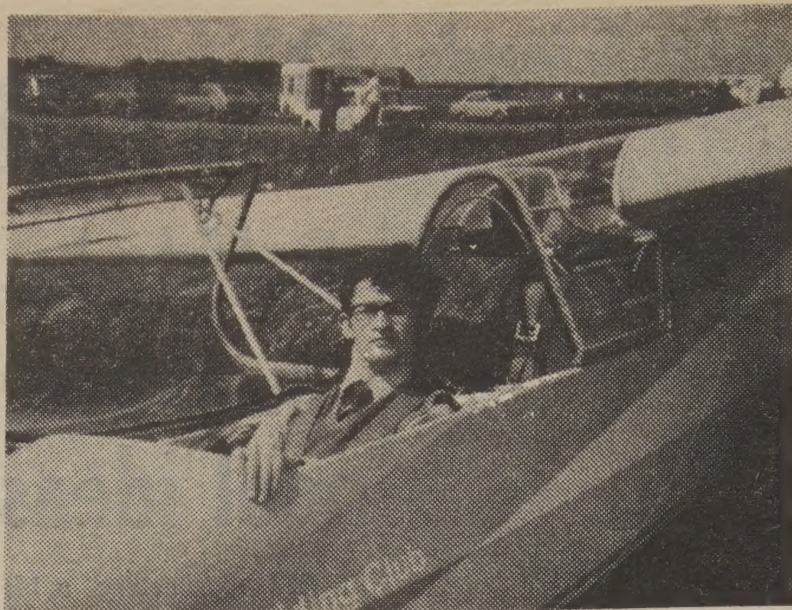
Gliding in Fred's footsteps

AS a boy Gerald Ellis could not walk a step until the age of eight, when he was flown to London to attend Bertha Bobath's Western Cerebral Palsy Clinic. Now 21, he flies himself.

Gerard, the only son of a Chapelizod, County Dublin architect is, like Fred Loggins of Lincolnshire, whose story was told in Spastics News some time ago, an ardent glider.

In fact his only complaint is that he cannot do enough of it, but as he points out, 'You need time and money and these things don't usually go together.'

Gerard has been studying for the first of his law examinations as a solicitor's apprentice. But whenever he can he drives his unadapted car out to Baldonald Airfield, shows his identity card and



then climbs into one of the Dublin Gliding Club's machines. At the moment he is still flying with dual controls. Aerobatics he rules out because they need quick co-ordination and advanced flying. He finds flying relaxing and exhilarating.

As a child, however, the future seemed bleak since he could not walk and lived in a remote area. Then his parents took him to the Bobaths' and their exercises were to put Gerard on his feet. His father drove him to school since there were few buses—and fewer schools prepared to accept him. Eventually as a teenager with above average ability, he was allowed to use a tape recorder to sit his exams, and passed with honours. He also passed his driving test.

Once he could drive, Gerard looked round for a hobby and took to gliding—his parents refused to allow him to go motor racing. Now Gerard has also had a go at powered flying he sees possibilities there—for there is greater stability in a plane.

But in the meantime he is up, up and away in k7.

Their stall won a cup

SPASTIC residents of Friendship House, Poole, Dorset, won a cup for the best stall at an exhibition of work by the disabled. The event was held at Poole Hospital fete and among the Friendship House residents taking part were Margaret and Brian Oliver, stars of the Society's prize-winning film 'Like Other People.'

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Chance to be chess champ

A CHESS tournament for the disabled will be held at the Marlborough Hotel, Hastings, Sussex, for a week from December 28 1975. This event, held for the first time last year in conjunction with the Hastings Chess Congress, has now been officially named the English Championship for the Disabled. It is hoped to hold it once again alongside the Hastings Chess Congress. The Marlborough Hotel has been adapted to offer facilities for disabled guests.

Conference on leisure activities

DELEGATES from all over the world—including Japan, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, the USA, Australia, and throughout Britain—are attending a unique conference in Arnhem, Holland, from September 1-6. Purpose of the conference is to explore sporting and leisure

possibilities for disabled people, and nearly half the delegates are handicapped.

The conference is organised by the International Cerebral Palsy Society, and is the first of its kind. Mr Derek Lancaster-Gaye, Chairman of the Society's Sports and Leisure Group, said: 'The idea is to provide a forum for discussion on leisure activities, backed up by practical demonstrations. How to occupy leisure time is becoming increasingly important for all of us. But for the disabled it is particularly important, because so many of them are unable to work, and have far more empty hours to fill.'

County mix-up

HUGH SLATER and Carol Oliver marry this month at the Parish Church, Ashford, MIDDLESEX, and not Kent as reported in last month's Spastics News, and the publican who raised money to help them buy their super sized double bed runs the Rose and Crown, Old Romney, KENT, and not Surrey!

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News about the Spastics Pool



SURPRISE, surprise! I can't believe it appears to be Mrs I. Poulton's reaction to the news that she has won £3,333 on the first dividend of the Spastics Pool.

Mrs Poulton, of Leicester received her cheque from area representative Mr Donald Aldridge.

Holidays in Majorca - via the Motor Show

ONCE again the Motor Show attendance will form the basis of a competition for Spastics Pool supporters. This year the prizes will be holidays at the Hotel Santa Lucia, Palma Nova, Majorca. The choice was easy as previous Spastics Pool competition winners had spoken highly of the hotel and the resort.

All supporters of the Pool will have the opportunity of entering this free competition which will be featured on the weekly bulletin. The competition will be simplicity itself, and should prove an attraction to prospective members.

The results will be determined by the official attendance figures issued by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders



AT the Aldington home of supervisor KE74 Derek Cowell, three recent winners and their collectors celebrated their success on the Spastics Pool. Mr Leonard Dorman, of Royds Road, South Willesborough, and Mrs Doris Sourtell, of Bridge Street, Wye, each won a Vauxhall Chevette, and our picture shows Mrs Thurling, from Sellindge, receiving a cheque for £600 from her collector, Mr Hopkins.

Ltd, the organisers of the Motor Show.

The 1975 Show will be held at Earls Court from October 15 to 25.

The message to members should be 'win your next year's holiday this autumn.'

Don will carry on collecting

AT the end of August, Don Vickers, from Telford, will visit his collectors for the last time as supervisor SH63. Promotion to housing superintendent for the District of the Wrekin Council means that he will have far less time to devote to his supervision.

He commented during a recent visit to Westmorland House, Pool headquarters at Bristol, 'I would rather resign than feel that I could not provide the service to my collectors and the company. But I don't intend to lose contact with the many friends I have made during my seven years as a supervisor. To start with, my wife and I will continue our collection and I hope that I will be able to offer support to my successor.'

September cookery

While runner beans are still plentiful, try this savoury flan (it is economical) which can be eaten hot or cold.



RUNNER BEAN FLAN

- 3lb skinless pork sausages
- 2 skinned tomatoes
- 2oz butter
- 3lb runner beans, sliced
- 1 pint seasoned white sauce
- 1 dessertspoon salad cream
- 2 level dessertspoons chopped parsley
- 1 x 7in baked pastry flan case
- 1/2oz home-produced cheese, grated

Chop the sausages and tomatoes. Melt the butter in a pan and cook sausages and tomatoes in it for about eight minutes. Cook beans in boiling, salted water. Strain. Mix the sauce with salad cream, parsley, beans, tomatoes and sausages. Spread mixture in the hot pastry case. Sprinkle with cheese and flash under the grill until lightly coloured. Serve hot or cold.

Borstal boys help Scots to record

RECORD flag days have been held in two Scottish towns in aid of spastics. At Stirling, a party of boys from the local Borstal helped to raise more than £580 for the Scottish Council for Spastics, making it the most profitable flag day ever for the town.

A total of more than £500 was also collected during a similar event in Ayr. Flag day takings here were boosted by Johnny Beattie, Vice-chairman of the Stars Organisation for Spastics (Scotland), who made an appeal from the stage of the Gaiety Theatre where he is appearing in a summer show.

A FETE held at Westerlea School for Spastic Children in Edinburgh has raised more than £2,000. The money will go into a fund for a new centre to be built by the Scottish Council for Spastics.

A SPONSORED walk held by pupils of Hayward Grammar School has brought in over £155 for Bolton and District Spastics Society.

NORWICH schoolgirls Valerie Warnes and Julie Plumstead, both aged 15, have raised £54 for spastics with a jumble sale. This total is more than double the amount they achieved with a similar effort last year.

A HOUSE-TO-HOUSE collection and flag day held by Bath and District Spastics Society has raised £591.



MRS GEORGINA THOMSON receives the keys of her new Vauxhall Chevette from Mr Peter Gibbon, managing director of Adams & Gibbon, the Vauxhall main dealers, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Also present was Mrs Stockdale, NU60/225, the official collector.

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Who will achieve most in 1975?

WHO will be the winner of this year's special Achievement Award for spastics? Once again, nominations are invited for this popular event which not only shows the public how handicapped people can and do win through if given a chance, but also encourages other disabled people to realise their own potential.

The citation remains the same—for the most outstanding achievement or sustained effort in particularly difficult circumstances by a spastic man, woman or youngster over the age of 12. Someone who fights a tremendous personal battle over daunting odds, with a seemingly unspectacular result, stands just as much chance as an individual who has scored top honours in some field with perhaps less personal effort and more favourable circumstances.

£250 cheque

The winner will receive a cheque for £250—this first prize is donated—and will hold the silver Award Cup for one year, and there will also be prizes for the runners-up.

Remember, spastics cannot, of course, nominate themselves for this Award, so if you know, or know of, someone you think could qualify, please give them their chance by sending their name and address, approximate age and as much background information as possible, to Mrs Nina Heycock, 88/89 Queen's Gate, London SW7, who organises the event on behalf of The Spastics Society. Closing date for entries is Monday December 8 1975, and judging will take place early in the New Year.

The entries will be judged by a panel of well-known personalities especially chosen for their own experience in successfully overcoming personal difficulties.

Anyone can make a nomination—members of local groups, teachers, social workers, friends, families, neighbours and colleagues of spastics, employers, members of the Spastics Pool, collectors, '62 Club members, PHAB and other organisations, and fellow-residents at centres, workshops, etc. The Award is open to spastics throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Society claims: Spastics treated as rogues and vagabonds

PHYSICALLY handicapped people are in danger of being seriously discriminated against in the 1824 Vagrancy Act, says the Director of The Spastics Society, Mr James Loring. He added that a warning of possible prosecution has been issued by the City of London Police. Mr Loring has written to the Home Secretary, Mr Roy Jenkins, to protest against what he calls 'an outrageous and anachronistic piece of legislation.'

The part of the Act he is concerned with is contained in Section Four. There it states that 'every Person wandering abroad and endeavouring by the Exposure of Wounds or Deformities to obtain or gather Alms... shall be deemed a Rogue and Vagabond, within the true Intent and Meaning of this Act.'

Police warning

Mr Loring pointed out that following The Spastics Society's City of London flag day last year, a warning had been received from the Police that by allowing people who were obviously spastics to collect, the Society was contravening this section of the Vagrancy Act. Although the Police would be reluctant to do so, they would be forced to prosecute, should there be any complaints.

He told the Home Secretary that such legislation is 'an unspeakable contravention of human rights.' He said that the spastics who took part in the flag day are mature adults, fully capable of making up their own minds. They should not be prevented from taking part in a perfectly legal charitable activity just because they happen to be handicapped. It was not as if they were collecting money specifically for their own benefit.

The insult, he said, is compounded by the fact that the Vagrancy Act is headed: 'An Act for the Punishment of idle and disorderly Persons and Rogues and Vagabonds.' And that also included in section Four among the people to be deemed Rogues and Vagabonds are such people as those who exhibit obscene pictures, people who indecently expose themselves, those who carry

offensive weapons, house-breaking implements, and so on.

'Must perfectly law abiding, but physically handicapped citizens be lumped together with these?' Mr Loring asks.

As Spastics News went to Press, Mr Loring was particularly worried about the legislation in view of the City of London flag day on September 2. At a time when inflation is biting deeply into the Society's funds, he stressed, it needs all the voluntary help it can muster, handicapped or not.

'Beggars'

The Director told the Home Secretary that a successful prosecution would, in his view, be unlikely because it would not be within the spirit of the Act which was drawn up to deal with the large number of fortune tellers, beggars, petty thieves and so on which abounded as a result of the Napoleonic war. Nevertheless it appeared that an agonising and costly court case would be necessary in order to establish a precedent.

And he urged the Home Secretary to take steps to ensure that handicapped people are not deprived of their dignity, and to avoid such a court hearing becoming necessary.

981.2 miles to go

TWO Harrow School boys, John Campbell and Edward Wheen had 981.2 miles ahead of them when this picture was taken at John O'Groats. It took them less than a fortnight to pedal down to Land's End, by which time they

were doubtless looking forward to locking away their bikes in the cycle sheds and getting down to the less arduous task of parsing their Latin grammar. They cycled to raise money for the London Regional Fund of the Society.



Drivers on collision course over three-wheelers

AN action first suggested in Spastics News two months ago has put the government on the road to a collision course with three-wheeler drivers. Already one driver has issued a High Court writ against the Department of Health and Social Security claiming damages for negligence as a result of a trike accident, and other drivers are ready

'It's a serious situation,' said Peter MacBryan, Co-ordinator of the Disabled Drivers' Action Group which is campaigning to have the three-wheelers banned, and adapted cars introduced in their place.

Said Mr MacBryan: 'It will be highly embarrassing for the government if the department has to fight the case.'

At present the department is considering just what steps to take following the action by

Nigel Gregory, aged 24, of Sittingbourne, Kent, who was injured in an accident involving his trike. He alleges that his vehicle was blown over in high winds, throwing him through the roof because of design faults in the trike.

Another driver is preparing to go ahead with a case.

'Good chance'

Mr MacBryan commented: 'We have sought counsel's opinion and that opinion is that we have a very good chance of success. If one case succeeds where a trike has overturned, then others will follow. The longer the department leaves it the greater the number of drivers who will follow suit. It's awful that stage has to be reached in my view—far better if the trike was phased out as the government inquiry of Lady Sharp recommended.'

He said that the High Court writ would probably be dropped if the government agreed to take the three-wheelers off the road and substitute adapted cars.

This follows the report by the Ombudsman, Sir Alan Marre, which criticised parliamentary replies as being 'less than frank' about the three-wheelers' safety record.

Accident figures revealed that trike drivers were nine times more likely to be involved in accidents and injured than drivers of ordinary cars. Drivers were far safer in adapted vehicles.

Mr MacBryan denied that three-wheelers were sometimes the only answer to a disabled driver's problems. 'That is the department's view. DAF, the Dutch firm, has produced an adapted car to cope with an incredible range of handicaps—it's just unbelievable what they have achieved—and these cars have been driven in Holland for the last 10 years.'

During the month another critical report on the trike will be published, this time in the Automobile Association's magazine, 'Drive.' The report reveals the results of tests carried out into the repairs done on three-wheelers and it is, said Mr MacBryan, 'quite grim.'

Big effort to boost Christmas card sales

SPASTICS Cards Ltd is making an all-out effort to boost sales to the Society's local groups this Christmas, and is offering not only unrivalled value and quality in its range of goods, but excellent terms to aid group funds.

Some local groups are fully aware of the benefits from selling Spastics Cards, and the difference that the 37½ per cent grant they receive from the company on the full selling price can make to their funds, but it is known that others are buying cards from commercial publishers. On these deals they usually only receive a 25 per cent discount, so they are losing money as well as the opportunity of helping the cause of spastics.

Mr Ron Butterfield, general manager of Spastics Cards Ltd,

has planned the sales campaign which has included visits to local groups to discuss promotion ideas, the distribution of attractive brochures, handbills and 'coasters,' and the passing on of the clever ideas which forward-looking groups have already used to increase sales.

Canteens

One of the best is to sell cards in factory canteens when all the staff is gathered together—on a pay day! Only the most skinflint management will refuse to allow the group to set up a table to sell the cards and other Christmas items; the handbills can be used to announce the event, and the coasters—which would otherwise have been waste from one of the company's

'out out' cards—have been designed for advance publicity in the canteen itself.

Other selling ideas are many and numerous. There are the stalwarts at Hemel Hempstead who sell in the local bingo hall foyer. Bingo halls usually open for an hour before 'eyes down' and a table in the foyer can do good business.

Then there are the spastics at a work centre in the north who sold over £1,000 worth of merchandise last Christmas and made a big addition to their centre's social and recreational fund.

Schools

At Preston, the enterprising group secretary circulated schools and local organisations offering them 25 per cent discount for their funds if they sold on behalf of spastics. (The

group of course still receives the margin of 12½ per cent for its own funds, and in addition gains useful publicity.) Many voluntary organisations would be willing to help the local group in this way as long as their own fund raising of 25 per cent is not affected.

Spastics Cards Ltd has played its part by providing a super selection of cards and Christmas novelties at very low prices. In spite of inflation, prices of packets of cards have been kept to last year's level, and even cheaper cards have been introduced which work out at a fraction over 2p each! There are lots of Christmas accessories, too, at prices everyone can afford.

A colourful catalogue of cards, gifts, etc., is available from Spastics Cards Ltd, The Ridgeway, Iver, Bucks.



Puffed up with a new record at Lincoln

THEY came by car, double-decker bus and by steam engine to what has become one of the greatest events in the Lincoln calendar—the two-day Lincolnshire Steam Spectacular organised by the Lincoln and District Spastics Society show committee.

For the first time it was staged at the county show-ground, north of Lincoln and south of Caenby Corner, where its fame was such that it had outgrown the facilities. And the show committee's gamble paid off. Explained show organiser Peter Brown: 'We moved because for the last two years we just filled car parks up. By going to the show ground there was space for 20,000 cars, double-decker buses running from Lincoln, and also the benefit of using permanent buildings and hard roads. We got a record attendance—26,000, beating the 1973 record by 200.'

Twenty vintage steam

engines took part—there would have been one or two more but their farmer-owners decided to take advantage of the splendid summer weather and concentrate on harvesting. The steam engines were soon getting up enough puff to go through their party pieces of musical chairs and obstacle races.

£6,000 aid

Watching the fun was a coach party from the Scunthorpe Work Centre, which has benefited to the tune of £6,000 from the Steam Spectaculars. 'We won't know how much this year's show has made until the end of September, but already we are planning next year's event. That will have to be a really spectacular spectacular as it will be our tenth,' said Peter.

Show picture by courtesy of the Lincolnshire Echo.